

MISSION STATEMENT

The Ad Hoc Committee on Best Practices in Northampton Decision Making, as appointed by the Northampton City Council in February 2007, has been charged with responsibility in several arenas. One is to review the City's municipal decision-making practices. Another is to recommend practices that will foster the general democratic enterprise of being responsive and responsible to the fiscal, economic, social, and environmental interests of its citizens. We believe that to achieve this the City must optimize citizen participation. We are committed to ensuring the fullest opportunity possible for members of the public to express their views, and have these views be carefully considered.

Our Committee goals:

- Emulate “best practices” by abiding by the Open Meeting Law, holding meetings in accessible locations, inviting media and having our meetings and communications documented and accessible to the public.
- Engage the extraordinary diversity of city residents in this process.
- Create and oversee a public process for reviewing municipal decision-making in the City of Northampton and make recommendations to the City Council, on or before January 16, 2009, on ensuring the use of locally and nationally accepted best practices in our community.

Reports, including progress reports and recommendations by the Committee, are to be submitted to the City Counsel as follows:

April 3, 2008: A progress report that will include a preliminary work plan and a draft schedule for public forums and meetings with other groups.

December 4, 2008: The Committee shall issue draft recommendations to the

City Council, and shall make a public presentation.

Thereafter, a ninety (90) day public review period will ensue, during which there shall be community outreach and public hearings.

March 5, 2009: the Committee's final report shall be submitted to the City Council.